

MODERN EDUCATION AND NARRATIVE PEDAGOGY

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Abstract

On the basis of an analysis of scientific literature, international and Lithuanian documentary, the article researches the problematic question whether narrative pedagogy can respond to the challenges of modern education. In order to fulfill the challenges arising to the society, a need occurs to focus on narrative pedagogy that enables the creation (occurrence) of communities of learning teachers, which are characterized by learning from each other, learning with others, learning for others, learning to analyze how we learn (meta-learning), responsibility for self-growth and the growth of colleagues. The essence of narrative pedagogy is the story which can be a powerful mechanism for transformation, learning and interpretation of personal experience. Also the article analyzes the characteristics of narrative pedagogy: A Community of Story-Sharing, A Means of Identity Formation, Moving From "Lived" Stories to "Living" Stories, A Liberating Practice.

KEYWORDS: narrative, narrative pedagogy, modern education.

Introduction

The world's education system constantly changes, responds to the challenges of the world, searches for new forms of education, ideas, theories, etc. In the beginning of the 21 c., the importance of the knowledge society was highlighted, however, presently focus is given on the ideas of a new future society - thinking society (Wilenius, 2008), creative society (Florida, 2002); and narrative pedagogy, according to M. Pamela (2003), can be a challenge to traditional forms of education and is understood not only as a method to deepen personal and practical expertise while telling about life experience, but also as a broader educational trend, which activates the human activity, the social aspect of participation as well as learning in the community.

Narrative pedagogy in various countries of the world is developed in various fields, such as the care sector in the USA and Japan (Diekelmann, 2001; Young, 2004; Kawashima, 2005), adult education, particularly in the United Kingdom and other European countries (Goodson, Scherto, 2010). Besides, recently in foreign sciences the importance of narrative pedagogy, emphasizing a teacher's professional development, has been highlighted. This is evidenced by the recent works of one of the initiators of narrative pedagogy Ivor F. Goodson in the field of narrative pedagogy: Narrative Pedagogy Life History and Learning (2010), Developing Narrative Theory Life Histories and Personal Representation (2013), etc. Also the ideas of narrative pedagogy are developed in the works of other foreign scientists: Jiwani (2011), Woo, Laxman (2013), Ironside (2006), Porter (2011), Yim-mei Chan, Sharon Sui-ngan Ng (2012), Szurmak, Thuna (2013), Conle (2001) etc.

In the Lithuanian scientific space there are few researches related to narrative pedagogy as a fundamental concept that activates a person's powers and provides conditions for professional development. One of the latest works about the narrative in Lithuania – the thesis by V. Venslovaite "Influence of the Teacher's Narrative on the Aesthetic Perception of the Student: Phenomenological Perspective of Musical Expression" (2013), in which the narrative was studied as a means of the student's aesthetic perception. In other research works the narrative is understood as a research method: the experiences of teenagers whose parents work abroad (Malinauskas, Mozerytė, 2012); creation of museum narratives (Šermukšnytė, 2012); historical narrative (Žemgulis, 2007); narratological analysis of the historical monograph by M. Jučas "Battle of Grunwald" (Žemgulis, 2008); analysis of narratives in the folklore science (Būgienė, 2008); the circumstances of leaving from work are analyzed (Sondaite, Stunženaitė, 2010), etc. Also the narrative identity and popular culture are studied (Kačerauskas, 2006).

In Lithuania, the application of the narrative in the process of education is practiced in the sciences of philology, folklore and history, however, it is fragmented, verbal and written narration is used, without the development of the narrative pedagogy concept and its applicability in today's education. Therefore, this article raises a **problematic issue** - whether narrative pedagogy may respond to the challenges of modern education?

Aim – to reveal how narrative pedagogy responds to the challenges of modern education. In this paper, *theoretical research methods* have been used: analysis of scientific literature, international and Lithuanian documents, interpretation, evaluation, generalization.

Modern education: towards narrative pedagogy

Modeled concepts of the society's progress, strategies, etc., pose challenges for the education system as well. For example, the State Progress Strategy "*Progress Strategy of Lithuania "Lithuania 2030"* (2012) establishes the priority for the future - to build an intelligent society, characterized by creativity, openness and responsibility, as "only a person who grows up and lives in an developing atmosphere will be able to create and be a part of a smart society".

The provisions of *the National Education Strategy for 2013-2022* (2013) state that "it is necessary to find the incentives and conditions for the emergence of communities of reflective, creative and professional teachers <...>, to develop the skills of gathering leadership of the heads of educational institutions <...> to achieve such a level of pedagogical communities where their critical mass consists of reflecting, continuously developing and effectively working professional teachers".

The Communication of the European Commission "*Europe 2020. A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*" (2010) emphasizes the abilities to implement innovations, improve the quality of education institutions and their results, focusing on creativity, innovations and entrepreneurship.

The Communication of the European Commission "*Supporting the Teaching Professions for Better Learning Outcomes. Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes*" (2012) focuses on critical thinking, professional dialogue (collegiality), active performance in the classroom and outside it and the necessity of the achievement of students' results ensuring the establishment of communities of professional teachers. Thus, teachers in the new millennium face a need to expand their competencies.

It is stated in the report of OECD "*Education at a Glance 2012*" (2012) that seeking high achievements of students, first of all the professional development of teachers must be ensured. As it is stated in the European Commission's Communication "*Supporting the Teaching Professions for Better Learning Outcomes. Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes*" (2012), professional development encourages teachers to take the initiative to change the curriculum, to develop the use of innovations in the teaching practice and helps weaker teachers to become more effective.

In the report of OECD "*Teachers' Professional Development: Europe in international comparison*" (2010), an effective teacher is characterized as distinguished by dedication, commitment, trust, analytical and conceptual thinking, progress and pursuit of knowledge, initiative, responsibility, etc.

Thus, according to T. J. Sergiovanni (1998), in order substantial changes in teacher training (learning) practice, student teaching (learning), relationships, etc., would take place, it is imperative that teachers would be able to share experiences, follow general norms, develop deeper understanding of their subject, etc.

In order to respond to the challenges posed by the society, a need to focus on narrative pedagogy emerges that enables the creation (occurrence) of communities of learning teachers (so-called Building Learning Communities). Stoll and Fink (1998) note that for the growth of the school as a learning organization, learning and continuous improvement of its participants - teachers, students, parents, administration - is necessary. "Learning of teachers must become a goal of the school's development and the interim result, because the development of the school is mainly determined by the extent to which it involves the teachers" (Stoll, Fink, 1998, p. 178), because teachers are the link the efficiency of the educational process depends on both in a classroom and on the educational institution's level. Teachers' development is influenced by all the events of their life, thus, seeking the quality of education in the broad sense, it is necessary to train teachers to discuss, solve problems and make joint decisions (Stoll and Fink, 1998). Learning communities are characterized by the following: learning from others, learning with others, learning for others, learning to analyze, the way we learn (meta-learning) (<http://www.slideshare.net/TimeForLeaders/julie-temperley-tinkl-krimas-mokymosi-interest>). Thus, as Stoll and Fink (1998, p.186) argue, "if teachers improve the entire school, and not just their classes, it is possible to talk about the growth in the broadest sense. Teachers become part of a learning community and every day feel responsibility for their own growth and the growth of their colleagues".

Narrative pedagogy, the purpose of which is the creation (occurrence) of communities of learning teachers, has been discovered by Diekelman while performing a fifteen-year experiment with teachers, students and treating physicians from nursing school (Pamela, 2003). Then narrative pedagogy was oriented to community practice, involvement of teachers and students in converging conversations

seeking to avoid the idealization, romanization, etc., of the participants of learning as well as the curriculum. Pamela (2003) notes that narrative pedagogy includes a range of pedagogy fields: conventional, critical, feminist, postmodern and phenomenological, involving the interpretation of experiences of teachers and students from different perspectives (Pamela, 2003).

The essence of narrative pedagogy is the story which can be a powerful mechanism for transformation, learning and interpretation of personal experience. In the field of education, stories or narratives were used in two different ways: firstly, storytelling as a pedagogical strategy, and secondly, the narrative as a research method. As a pedagogical strategy: teachers themselves deepen into their practices and provide new directions for further professional development. As a research method, narrative research is linked to the storytelling while studying different phenomena (Coulter, Michael, Poynor, 2007, p. 104). For example, Thomas Moore (2003), while describing why stories are so powerful, argues that stories give pleasure as they free from the anxiety for the regularity of each detail. They allow us to consider complex issues and go deep at this. For example, Christian educators had recognized the power of history long ago and argued that history is a key component of Christian teaching (Miller, 2003; Shaw, 1999 and etc.). For the application of the narrative, scientists distinguish personal, interpersonal and group levels and provide a wide range of the objectives of stories: memories about the past, argumentation, convincing of possibly skeptical listeners, involvement of listeners to the narrator's experience, their engagement or attraction, misleading, focusing for a social change (Clark, 2010, p.5).

Variation of narrative pedagogy's characteristics

In the scientific space, it is possible to find a variety of descriptions of pedagogical narrative. One of the most comprehensive characteristic of narrative pedagogy is provided by Benjamin D. Espinoza (2013) (see Figure 1).

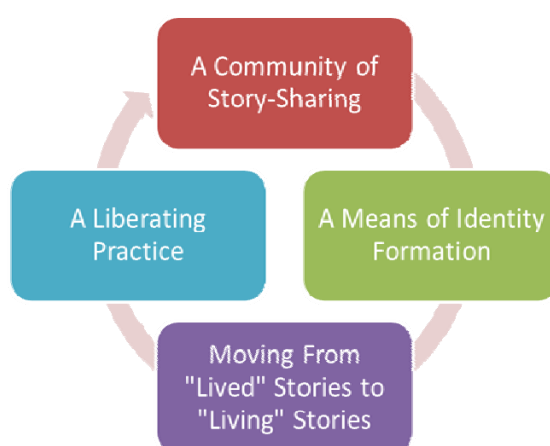


Fig. 1. Characteristics of Narrative Pedagogy

A Community of Story-Sharing. Storytelling is the essential component of narrative pedagogy, and the narrative is significant to human interaction, preservation of culture, etc. (Espinoza, 2013, p. 433). As M. Pamela (2003) states, narrative pedagogy exists when teachers and students publicly share and interpret their life experiences and while working together enables the collection of collective experience.

A Means of Identity Formation. Narrative pedagogy is also significant to the formation of the identity, since the identity is made up of the stories we remember and choose to tell about ourselves (Espinoza, 2013, p. 435). The narrative theory of identity also emphasizes that we are the stories we tell about ourselves (Espinoza, 2013, p. 435). We consist of personal, internal, public, physical, family, emotional, cultural and others stories. These stories outline the direction of our life, the moral path, relationships with others, the way of thinking, social functioning, etc. (Espinoza, 2013, p. 436).

Moving From “Lived” Stories to “Living” Stories. Narrative pedagogy is characterized by moving from experienced stories in the past to the creation of living stories in the present and in the future. Lived stories with their mistakes, sorrow, successes, etc., are those that cannot be changed but can be used to project the present and the future (Espinoza, 2013, p. 437). In the work of a teacher, this characteristic

may reveal itself not only on the personal level, but individual stories of the past can be significant for mutual and group development of teachers and experiential learning (self-learning) from each other.

A Liberating Practice. Narrative pedagogy enables people liberation from the oppressive and problematic stories by transforming thoughts, its content and the behavior (Espinoza, 2013, p. 439). The story can provide a deep sense to the experienced story in raising the overall emotions, ethical and moral values by developing common culture and relationships, which communion can direct people towards change (Espinoza, 2013, p. 157-158). Thus, narrative pedagogy enables teachers to help for the students to construct their own future, leaving beyond the past "limitations" (what hindered their progress), and to become a societal change agents of future.

Conclusions

1. National and international documents of the new millennium focus on development of well-minded, creative society, which establishment is affected with fundamental importance of education in its broadest sense. So, in order to become an advanced society need to develop learning, teachers' community, who ensures the quality of education.
2. Narrative pedagogy enables the creation of learning communities of teachers, which are characterized by self-contained learning, learning from each other and with others, self-training to analyse, to reflect and promote others learning (self-training).
3. In the scientific literature, a key component of the narrative pedagogy is a story, which can be a powerful mechanism for transformation, learning and interpretation of individual experience, and used as a teaching strategy or study method. Narrative pedagogy is understood not only as a method to extend personal and practical knowledge by telling about life experience, but also as a broader educational trends, which activates the human energies, the social aspect of participation and learning in the community.
4. The world scientists distinguish the main narrative pedagogy characteristics: A Community of Story-Sharing, A Means of Identity Formation, Moving From "Lived" Stories to "Living" Stories, A Liberating Practice.

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MODERNUS UGDYMAS IR NARATYVINĖ PEDAGOGIKA

Santrauka

Straipsnyje, remiantis mokslinės literatūros, tarptautinių bei Lietuvos dokumentų analize, nagrinėjamas probleminis klausimas, ar naratyvinė pedagogika gali atliepti modernaus ugdymo iššūkius?

Modeliuojamos visuomenės pažangos koncepcijos, strategijos ir kt. kelia iššūkius ir švietimo sistemai. Kyla poreikis orientuotis į naratyvinę pedagogiką, kuri įgalina besimokančių mokytojų bendruomenių kūrimą(si), kurioms būdinga mokymasis vieniems iš kitų, mokymasis kartu su kitais, mokymasis dėl kitų, mokymasis analizuoti, kaip mes mokomės (metamokymasis), atsakomybė už savo ir kolegų augimą. Naratyvinės pedagogikos esmė – pasakojimas, kuris gali būti galingas mechanizmas transformacijai, mokymuisi ir individualios patirties interpretacijai. Švietimo srityje, istorijos arba naratyvai naudojami dviem skirtingais būdais: pirma, istorijų pasakojimas kaip pedagoginė strategija ir, antra, naratyvas kaip tyrimo metodas. Kaip pedagoginė strategija: mokytojai patys gilina si į savo praktikas ir numato naujas kryptis tolesniam profesiniam vystymuisi. Kaip tyrimo metodas, naratyvinis tyrimas siejamas su istorijos pasakojimu tiriant įvairius reiškinius. Taip pat straipsnyje analizuojama naratyvinės pedagogikos charakteristikos: bendruomenės, besidalinančios pasakojimais; identiteto formavimo(si) prasmė; judėjimas nuo išgyventų prie išgyvenamų istorijų; išlaisvinanti praktika.